

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-49 (Previously Canceled).

50. (Currently Amended) A method for producing an embossed sheet material including at least two layers of web material joined together, comprising steps of:

- embossing a first layer of web material, previously provided with a background pattern made up of a first set of protuberances, so as to generate on the first layer a second set of protuberances, which are higher than and partially superimposed on the first set of protuberances making up the background pattern, and defining an ornamental motif made up of a pattern of major dimensions and minor density with respect to the background pattern, said first set of protuberances and said second set of protuberances protruding from a common face of said first layer; and

- coupling by means of adhesive to said first layer of web material at least a second layer of web material,

- wherein the adhesive is applied, prior to said coupling of said first layer to said second layer, in areas corresponding to at least some protuberances of said second set of protuberances, the sheet material being substantially free of adhesive in correspondence with protuberances of

said first set of protuberances forming said background pattern.

51. (Previously Added) The method according to claim 50 wherein the background pattern on the first layer of web material is provided by embossing in-line and before the embossing of the first layer for generating said ornamental motif.

52. (Previously Canceled).

53. (Previously Canceled).

54. (Previously Amended) The method according to claim 89 further comprising generating said first set of protuberances and said second set of protuberances on the first layer by running said first layer around a first pressure roller interacting with a first embossing cylinder and a second embossing cylinder that have respectively a first set of points and a second set of points, the second set of points being of larger dimension and lower density than the first set of points.

55. (Currently Amended) A method for producing an embossed sheet material including at least two layers of web material joined together, comprising steps of:

- embossing a first layer of web material,
previously provided with a background pattern made up of a
first set of protuberances, so as to generate on the first
layer a second set of protuberances, which are partially

superimposed on the first set of protuberances making up the background pattern, and defining an ornamental motif made up of a pattern of major dimensions and minor density with respect to the background pattern,

- embossing a second layer of web material for generating thereon a third set of protuberances having the same density as the protuberances of said second set,

- coupling by means of adhesive to said first layer of web material at least said second layer of web material,

- wherein the adhesive is applied to a top surface of at least some protuberances of said third set of protuberances, the sheet material being substantially free of adhesive in correspondence with protuberances of said first set of protuberances forming said background pattern,

- wherein protuberances of said second set and said third set are inserted inside one another,

- wherein said first set of protuberances and said second set of protuberances are generated on the first layer by running said first layer around a first pressure roller interacting with a first embossing cylinder and a second embossing cylinder that have respectively a first set of points and a second set of points, the second set of points being of larger dimension and lower density than the first set of points, and

~~- wherein The method according to claim 54 further comprising joining together~~ said first layer and said second layer are joined together between the first pressure roller and the second embossing cylinder that interacts with the first pressure roller.

56. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim ~~54~~ or 55 wherein said second embossing cylinder interacts with a second pressure roller to generate a third set of protuberances on said second layer.

57. (Previously Canceled).

58. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim ~~54~~ or 55 further comprising embossing said second layer with a greater embossed depth than an embossed depth of the second set of protuberances on the first layer.

59. (Currently Amended) A method for producing an embossed sheet material including at least two layers of web material joined together, comprising steps of:

- embossing a first layer of web material, previously provided with a background pattern made up of a first set of protuberances, so as to generate on the first layer a second set of protuberances, which are partially superimposed on the first set of protuberances making up the background pattern, and defining an ornamental motif made up

of a pattern of major dimensions and minor density with respect to the background pattern,

- embossing a second layer of web material for generating thereon a third set of protuberances having the same density as the protuberances of said second set,

- coupling by means of adhesive to said first layer of web material at least said second layer of web material,

- wherein the adhesive is applied to a top surface of at least some protuberances of said third set of protuberances, the sheet material being substantially free of adhesive in correspondence with protuberances of said first set of protuberances forming said background pattern,

- wherein protuberances of said second set and said third set are inserted inside one another,

- wherein said first set of protuberances and said second set of protuberances are generated on the first layer by running said first layer around a first pressure roller interacting with a first embossing cylinder and a second embossing cylinder that have respectively a first set of points and a second set of points, the second set of points being of larger dimension and lower density than the first set of points, and ~~The method according to claim 54 further comprising running~~

- wherein said second layer is run around said first pressure roller, downstream of an area in which the first layer is embossed between said first embossing cylinder and said first pressure roller, and embossing said second layer on said first layer between the first pressure roller and the second embossing cylinder.

60. (Previously Added) The method according to claim 59 further comprising arranging a second pressure roller around the second embossing cylinder and feeding a third layer of web material around said second pressure roller, between the second pressure roller and the second embossing cylinder, so as to generate a fourth set of protuberances on the third layer, and the first layer, the second layer and the third layer being laminated together between the second embossing cylinder and the second pressure roller.

61. (Previously Added) The method according to claim 60 further comprising applying an adhesive to at least some protuberances of said second set of protuberances and adhering together the first layer, the second layer and the third layer by causing the adhesive to migrate through the first layer toward the second layer.

62. (Previously Amended) The method according to claim 89 further comprising generating said first set of protuberances by embossing with a first embossing cylinder and a first pressure roller, and generating said second set

of protuberances with a second pressure roller and a second embossing cylinder with which a third pressure roller interacts, the second embossing cylinder and the third pressure roller generating said third set of protuberances on said second layer.

63. (Previously Added) The method according to claim 50 wherein said second layer of web material is provided with a background pattern made up of a set of protuberances.

64. (Previously Amended) The method according to claim 63 wherein said background pattern of the second layer of web material is provided by embossing in-line and before coupling with the first layer of web material.

65. (Previously Canceled).

66. (Previously Canceled).

67. (Previously Amended) The method according to claim 63, wherein said first layer and said second layer are separately embossed by corresponding first embossing units, which generate protuberances forming the background pattern on the first layer and the second layer, and are then run around a first embossing cylinder provided with points for generating said ornamental motif on the first layer and for joining the first layer and the second layer.

68. (Currently Amended) A method for producing an embossed sheet material including at least two layers of web material joined together, comprising steps of:

- embossing a first layer of web material,
previously provided with a background pattern made up of a
first set of protuberances, so as to generate on the first
layer a second set of protuberances, which are higher than
and partially superimposed on the first set of protuberances
making up the background pattern, and defining an ornamental
motif made up of a pattern of major dimensions and minor
density with respect to the background pattern, said first
set of protuberances and said second set of protuberances
protruding from a common face of said first layer; and
- coupling by means of adhesive to said first
layer of web material at least a second layer of web
material,
- wherein the adhesive is applied in areas
corresponding to at least some protuberances of said second
set of protuberances, the sheet material being substantially
free of adhesive in correspondence with protuberances of
said first set of protuberances forming said background
pattern,
- wherein said second layer of web material is provided
with a background pattern made up of a set of protuberances,
- wherein said first layer and said second layer are
separately embossed by corresponding first embossing units,
which generate protuberances forming the background pattern
on the first layer and the second layer, and are then run

around a first embossing cylinder provided with points for generating said ornamental motif on the first layer and for joining the first layer and the second layer, The method according to claim 67

- wherein said first layer is embossed according to said background pattern between a pair of rollers of a first embossing unit and is subsequently embossed on a said first embossing cylinder provided with points for generating said ornamental motif, and

- wherein the second layer is embossed between a second embossing cylinder and a pressure roller, said second embossing cylinder being provided with points for generating said background pattern on the second layer and wherein the first layer and the second layer are joined between said first embossing cylinder and said second embossing cylinder.

69. (Previously Amended) The method according to claim 50 or 63, wherein said first layer and said second layer are joined together by a colored adhesive.

70. (Previously Amended) The method according to claim 89 further comprising applying an adhesive to at least some protuberances of said third set on said second layer, and joining said first layer and said second layer by adhering the first layer and the second layer together, with protuberances of said third set in correspondence with protuberances of said second set.

71. (Previously Amended) The method according to claim 89 further comprising applying an adhesive to at least some protuberances of said third set on said second layer, and joining said first layer and said second layer by adhering the first layer and the second layer together, with protuberances of said third set in correspondence with protuberances of said second set.

72. (Previously Added) The method according to claim 56 further comprising applying an adhesive to at least some protuberances of said third set on said second layer, and joining said first layer and said second layer by adhering said first layer and said second layer together, with protuberances of said third set in correspondence with protuberances of said second set.

73. (Previously Amended) The method according to claim 89 further comprising embossing said second layer with a greater embossed depth than an embossed depth of the second set of protuberances on the first layer.

74. (Previously Canceled).

75. (Previously Added) The method according to claim 56 further comprising embossing said second layer with a greater embossed depth than an embossed depth of the second set of protuberances on the first layer.

76. (Previously Canceled).

77. (Previously Amended) The method according claim 89 further comprising generating said first set of protuberances by a first embossing cylinder with a first pressure roller, and generating said second set of protuberances with a second pressure roller and a second embossing cylinder, with which a third pressure roller interacts, the second embossing cylinder and the third pressure roller generating said third set of protuberances on said second layer.

78. (Previously Amended) The method according to claim 64 wherein protuberances of said background pattern on the first layer and protuberances of said ornamental motif on the first layer project toward said second layer, while said protuberances of said background pattern on the second layer project toward said first layer.

79. (Previously Added) The method according to claim 64 wherein said first layer and said second layer are separately embossed by corresponding first embossing units, which generate protuberances forming the background pattern on the first layer and the second layer, and are then run around an embossing cylinder provided with points for generating said ornamental motif on the first layer and for joining the first layer and the second layer.

80. (Previously Added) The method according to claim 64 wherein said first layer and said second layer are joined together by a colored adhesive.

81. (Previously Added) The method according to claim 67 wherein said first layer and the said second layer are joined together by a colored adhesive.

82. (Previously Added) The method according to claim 68 wherein said first layer and said second layer are joined together by a colored adhesive.

83. (Previously Canceled).

84. (Previously Amended) The method according to claim 78 wherein said first layer and said second layer are separately embossed by corresponding first embossing units, which generate protuberances forming the background pattern on the first layer and the second layer, and are then run around an embossing cylinder provided with points for generating said ornamental motif on the first layer and for joining the first layer and the second layer.

85. (Previously Canceled).

86. (Previously Added) The method according to claim 78 wherein said first layer and said second layer are joined together by a colored adhesive.

87. (Previously Canceled).

88. (Currently Amended) A method for producing an embossed sheet material including at least two layers of web material joined together, comprising steps of:

- embossing a first layer of web material, previously provided with a background pattern made up of a first set of protuberances, so as to generate on the first layer a second set of protuberances, which are higher than and partially superimposed on the first set of protuberances making up the background pattern, and defining an ornamental motif made up of a pattern of major dimensions and minor density with respect to the background pattern, said first set of protuberances and said second set of protuberances protruding from a common face of said first layer; and

- coupling by means of adhesive to said first layer of web material at least a second layer of web material,

- wherein the adhesive is applied, prior to said coupling of said first layer to said second layer, in areas corresponding to at least some protuberances of said second set of protuberances, the sheet material being substantially free of adhesive in correspondence with protuberances of said first set of protuberances forming said background pattern, wherein the second set of protuberances are provided on the first layer before the first layer is joined to said second layer.

89. (Currently Amended) A method for producing an embossed sheet material including at least two layers of web material joined together, comprising steps of:

- embossing a first layer of web material, previously provided with a background pattern made up of a first set of protuberances, so as to generate on the first layer a second set of protuberances, which are partially superimposed on the first set of protuberances making up the background pattern, and defining an ornamental motif made up of a pattern of major dimensions and minor density with respect to the background pattern,

- embossing a second layer of web material for generating thereon a third set of protuberances having the same density as the protuberances of said second set,

- coupling by means of adhesive to said first layer of web material at least said second layer of web material,

- wherein the adhesive is applied, prior to said coupling of said first layer to said second layer, to a top surface of at least some protuberances of said third set of protuberances, the sheet material being substantially free of adhesive in correspondence with protuberances of said first set of protuberances forming said background pattern, and

- wherein protuberances of said second set and said third set are inserted inside one another.

90. (Previously Added) The method according to claim 89 wherein the background pattern on said first layer of web material is provided by embossing in-line and before the embossing of said first layer for generating said ornamental motif.

91. (Previously Added) The method according to claim 89 wherein said first set of protuberances are generated on said first layer by a first embossing cylinder, said third set of protuberances are generated on said second layer by a second embossing cylinder and said adhesive is applied thereon, while said second layer is in contact with said second embossing cylinder, said first layer is placed on said second layer while said second layer is still in contact with said second embossing cylinder, and said second set of protuberances are generated by laminating said first layer and said second layer on said second embossing cylinder.

92. (Previously Added) A method for producing an embossed sheet material including at least two layers of web material joined together, comprising steps of:

- embossing a first layer of web material, previously provided with a background pattern made up of a first set of protuberances, so as to generate on the first

layer a second set of protuberances, which are partially superimposed on the first set of protuberances making up the background pattern, and defining an ornamental motif made up of a pattern of major dimensions and minor density with respect to the background pattern, wherein the background pattern on the first layer of web material is provided by embossing in-line and before the embossing of the first layer for generating said ornamental motif,

- coupling by means of adhesive to said first layer of web material at least a second layer of web material, wherein the adhesive is applied in areas corresponding to at least some protuberances of said second set of protuberances, the sheet material being substantially free of adhesive in correspondence with protuberances of said first set of protuberances forming said background pattern,

- generating said first set of protuberances and said second set of protuberances on the first layer by running said first layer around a first pressure roller interacting with a first embossing cylinder and a second embossing cylinder that have respectively a first set of points and a second set of points, the second set of points being of larger dimension and lower density than the first set of points, and

- joining together said first layer and said second layer between the first pressure roller and the second embossing cylinder that interacts with the first pressure roller.

93. (Previously Added) The method according to claim 92 wherein said second embossing cylinder interacts with a second pressure roller to generate a third set of protuberances on said second layer.

94. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim ~~92~~ 93 further comprising applying an adhesive to at least some protuberances of said third set on said second layer, and joining said first layer and said second layer by adhering the first layer and the second layer together, with protuberances of said third set being in correspondence with protuberances of said second set.

95. (Previously Added) A method for producing an embossed sheet material including at least two layers of web material joined together, comprising steps of:

- embossing a first layer of web material, previously provided with a background pattern made up of a first set of protuberances, so as to generate on the first layer a second set of protuberances, which are partially superimposed on the first set of protuberances making up the background pattern, and defining an ornamental motif made up of a pattern of major dimensions and minor density with

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respect to the background pattern, wherein the background pattern on the first layer of web material is provided by embossing in-line and before the embossing of the first layer for generating said ornamental motif,

- coupling by means of adhesive to said first layer of web material at least a second layer of web material, wherein the adhesive is applied in areas corresponding to at least some protuberances of said second set of protuberances, the sheet material being substantially free of adhesive in correspondence with protuberances of said first set of protuberances forming said background pattern,

- generating said first set of protuberances and said second set of protuberances on the first layer by running said first layer around a first pressure roller interacting with a first embossing cylinder and a second embossing cylinder that have respectively a first set of points and a second set of points, the second set of points being of larger dimension and lower density than the first set of points, and

- running said second layer around said first pressure roller, downstream of an area in which the first layer is embossed between said first embossing cylinder and said first pressure roller, and embossing said second layer

on said first layer between the first pressure roller and the second embossing cylinder.

96. (Previously Added) The method according to claim 95 further comprising arranging a second pressure roller around the second embossing cylinder and feeding a third layer of web material around said second pressure roller, between the second pressure roller and the second embossing cylinder, so as to generate a fourth set of protuberances on the third layer, and the first layer, the second layer and the third layer being laminated together between the second embossing cylinder and the second pressure roller.

97. (Previously Added) The method according to claim 96 further comprising applying an adhesive to at least some protuberances of said second set of protuberances and adhering together the first layer, the second layer and the third layer by causing the adhesive to migrate through the first layer toward the second layer.

98. (Previously Added) The method according to claim 93 further comprising applying an adhesive to at least some protuberances of said third set on said second layer, and joining said first layer and said second layer by adhering said first layer and said second layer together, with protuberances of said third set in correspondence with protuberances of said second set.

99. (Currently Amended) A method for producing an embossed sheet material including at least two layers of web material joined together, comprising steps of:

- embossing a first layer of web material, previously provided with a background pattern made up of a first set of protuberances, so as to generate on the first layer a second set of protuberances, which are partially superimposed on the first set of protuberances making up the background pattern, and defining an ornamental motif made up of a pattern of major dimensions and minor density with respect to the background pattern,

- coupling by means of adhesive to said first layer of web material at least a second layer of web material,

- wherein the adhesive is applied in areas corresponding to at least some protuberances of said second set of protuberances, the sheet material being substantially free of adhesive in correspondence with protuberances of said first set of protuberances forming said background pattern,

- wherein said second layer of web material is provided with a background pattern made up of a set of protuberances,

- wherein said first layer and said second layer are separately embossed by corresponding first embossing units, which generate protuberances forming the background pattern

on the first layer and the second layer, and are then run around ~~an~~ a first embossing cylinder provided with points for generating said ornamental motif on the first layer and for joining the first layer and the second layer, and

- wherein ~~one of~~ said first layer ~~or said second layer~~ is embossed according to said background pattern between a pair of rollers of a first embossing unit and is subsequently embossed on ~~an~~ said first embossing cylinder provided with points for generating said ornamental motif, and wherein the second layer is embossed between a ~~further~~ second embossing cylinder and a pressure roller, said ~~further~~ second embossing cylinder being provided with points for generating said background pattern on the second layer and wherein the first layer and the second layer are joined between said first embossing cylinder and said second embossing cylinder.

100. (Previously Added) The method according to claim 99 wherein said first layer and said second layer are joined together by a colored adhesive.

101. (New) A method for producing an embossed sheet material including at least two layers of web material joined together, comprising steps of:

- embossing a first layer of web material, previously provided with a background pattern made up of a first set of protuberances, so as to generate on the first

layer a second set of protuberances, which are partially superimposed on the first set of protuberances making up the background pattern, and defining an ornamental motif made up of a pattern of major dimensions and minor density with respect to the background pattern,

- embossing a second layer of web material for generating thereon a third set of protuberances having the same density as the protuberances of said second set,

- coupling by means of adhesive to said first layer of web material at least said second layer of web material,

- wherein the adhesive is applied to a top surface of at least some protuberances of said third set of protuberances, the sheet material being substantially free of adhesive in correspondence with protuberances of said first set of protuberances forming said background pattern,

- wherein protuberances of said second set and said third set are inserted inside one another,

- wherein said first set of protuberances and said second set of protuberances are generated on the first layer by running said first layer around a first pressure roller interacting with a first embossing cylinder and a second embossing cylinder that have respectively a first set of points and a second set of points, the second set of points

being of larger dimension and lower density than the first set of points, and

- wherein said second embossing cylinder interacts with a second pressure roller to generate a third set of protuberances on said second layer.

102. (New) The method according to claim 101 further comprising applying an adhesive to at least some protuberances of said third set on said second layer, and joining said first layer and said second layer by adhering said first layer and said second layer together, with protuberances of said third set in correspondence with protuberances of said second set.

103. (New) A method for producing an embossed sheet material including at least two layers of web material joined together, comprising steps of:

- embossing a first layer of web material, previously provided with a background pattern made up of a first set of protuberances, so as to generate on the first layer a second set of protuberances, which are partially superimposed on the first set of protuberances making up the background pattern, and defining an ornamental motif made up of a pattern of major dimensions and minor density with respect to the background pattern,

- embossing a second layer of web material for generating thereon a third set of protuberances having the

same density as the protuberances of said second set,

- coupling by means of adhesive to said first layer of web material at least said second layer of web material,

- wherein the adhesive is applied to a top surface of at least some protuberances of said third set of protuberances, the sheet material being substantially free of adhesive in correspondence with protuberances of said first set of protuberances forming said background pattern,

- wherein protuberances of said second set and said third set are inserted inside one another,

- wherein said first set of protuberances and said second set of protuberances are generated on the first layer by running said first layer around a first pressure roller interacting with a first embossing cylinder and a second embossing cylinder that have respectively a first set of points and a second set of points, the second set of points being of larger dimension and lower density than the first set of points, and

- wherein said second layer is embossed with a greater embossed depth than an embossed depth of the second set of protuberances on the first layer.